... Ned in the block-house, a tale of early days in the west

Ellis Edward Sylvester
Title: ... Ned in the block-house, a tale of early days in the west

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Harold Gutmann.

His Book
BOY PIONEER SERIES.

NED IN THE BLOCK-HOUSE.

A TALE OF

EARLY DAYS IN THE WEST.

By EDWARD S. ELLIS,

AUTHOR OF "FIRE, SNOW AND WATER," "PERSERVERANCE PARKER," "A YOUNG HERO," "SWEPT AWAY," ETC., ETC.

PHILADELPHIA:
HENRY T. COATES & CO.
"Mr. Ellis's works are favorites and deserve to be. He shows variety and originality in his characters; and his Indians are human beings and not fancy pieces."—NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.

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NED IN THE BLOCK-HOUSE.

CHAPTER I.

IN THE FOREST.

"NOW you've got him, Ned!"
"Sh! keep quiet!"

The boy who was addressed as Ned was kneeling behind a fallen oak, in a Kentucky forest, carefully sighting at a noble buck that stood in the middle of a natural clearing or opening, with head upraised and antlers thrown back, as though he scented danger, and was searching for the point whence it threatened.

The splendid animal was no more than a hundred yards distant, so that no better target could have been offered. He was facing the youth, who aimed at the point above his fore legs, which opened the path to the heart of the creature.

The lad, who was sighting so carefully, was Ned Preston, and his companion was a colored boy...
with the unique name of Wildblossom Brown. There was not a week's difference in their ages, each having been born four years before the immortal Declaration of Independence. As the date on which we introduce him to the reader was the autumn of 1788, the years of the two may be calculated without trouble.

Ned Preston, as he drew bead on the deer, was as certain of bringing him down as he was of "barking" the gray squirrel, when it chirped its mimic defiance from the topmost limbs of the gnarled oak or branching sycamore.

Wildblossom, or "Blossom," as he was invariably called, was anxious that his young master should not miss, for the chilly autumn day was drawing to a close, and they had eaten nothing since morning. They were eager to reach the block-house, known as Fort Bridgman, and scarcely allowed themselves any halt for many hours; but night was closing in, and they must soon go into camp; food was therefore as indispensable as fire.

The deliberation of Ned Preston led Blossom to fear the game would bound away before the trigger was pulled. When, therefore, the African saw